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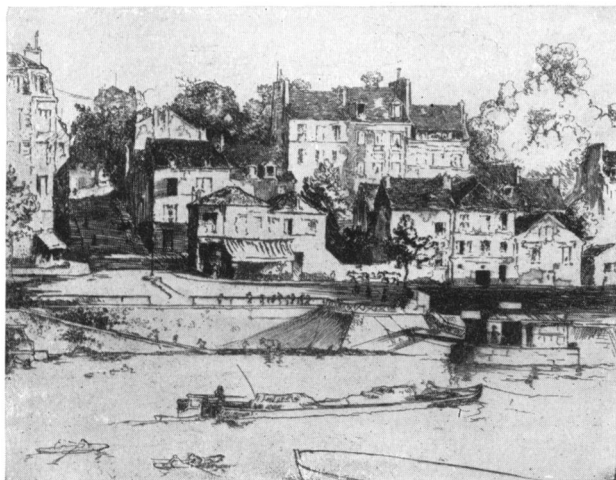
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LES CARRIERS, PARIS

C. K. GLEESON

AN EXHIBITION OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN ETCHINGS

HELD IN THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

BY THOMAS WOOD STEVENS

THE interest of the recent exhibition of Contemporary American Etchings at the Art Institute of Chicago, was that it represented more nearly than any exhibition yet held, the American plates of the present year. This comes as a logical result of the regular succession of exhibitions carried on by the Chicago Society of Etchers; frequent opportunity to show must be provided in order to bring these matters up to date.

When the Society of Etchers announced its first annual open exhibition, it received the flotsam of twenty years.

Forgotten portfolios were overhauled, and the collection, even with a jury devoted to new things, had a retrospective look. Some of these older proofs came back to the second jury. The mass of this work was sufficient to show how long the etching enthusiasm had been stifled, and to indicate the need of the contemporaneous standard which an annual exhibition might be expected to give. The recent exhibition, the third, has lost the backward look. It had in it the thought of the day.

Striking a broad classification by



RETROSPECTION

ERNEST HASKELL

methods, one might say that one etcher in eight is apparently working at the problem of the color print, either by aquatint or otherwise, and that most of this work is in a state of advanced experiment rather than solid achievement; that perhaps as many others concern themselves with etching as a method of rendering designs in tone, and for tonal strength primarily; and that three out of four are etching in accordance with the accepted tradition—in line. Within this tradition, a surprising amount of fresh work, novel in subject and selection, was to be found among the plates of the year.

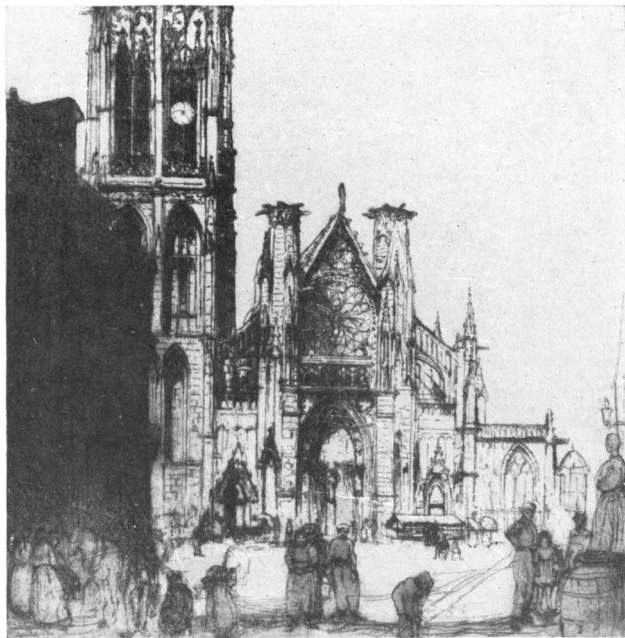
The exhibition included two hundred and twenty-five prints, selected from nearly twice that number submitted to the jury. These represent sixty-one etchers, resident in Chicago, New York, Boston, Paris and various other places in America and abroad. The membership of the Chicago Society is far from local, as shown by the fact that but five of the year's exhibitors are not members.

The Society recently voted to give ten per cent of its income to the purchase of prints to be presented to the Print Department of the Art Institute, the selection to be made by a committee representing both the Associate Members

and the Trustees of the Institute; this fund has been somewhat increased by gifts, and the eleven prints chosen may serve as examples of work considered desirable for the permanent collections of the Museum.

From Sears Gallagher the Institute acquires a proof of a very delicate plate, "Appledore, England"; from C. K. Glee-

Jaques has two London motives, "Thames Boats" and "Rain on the Thames," the latter in particular very fine in design and atmospheric suggestion. B. J. Olsson-Nordfeldt has one of his recent San Francisco plates, "California Street," unconventional in composition and clever in handling. Ralph Pearson furnished one of the largest proofs in the list,



ST. JACQUES CATHEDRAL, DIEPPE

DOROTHY STEVENS

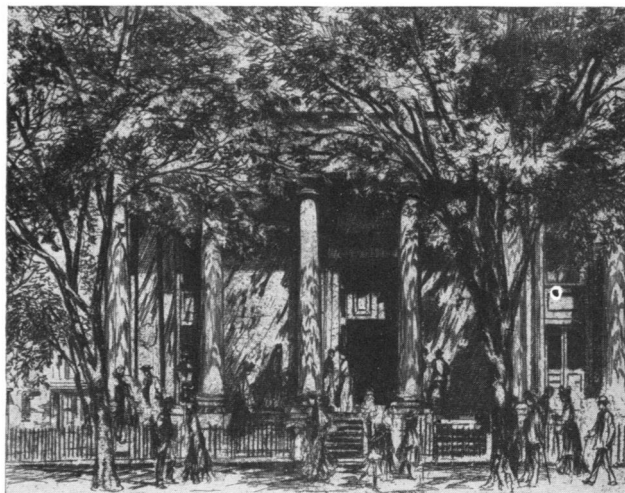
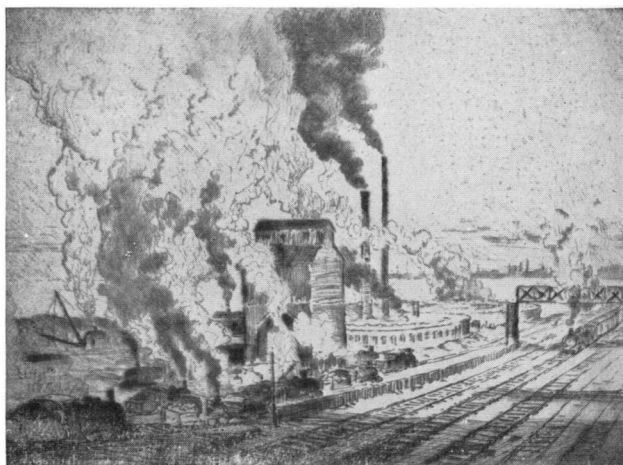
son, a busy, sparkling old world note; from Lester Hornby, a proof called "Le Matin," in which the most recent development of this resourceful artist is shown—a print in which the expression of the sharp nearby shadow against the flooding light across a silvery distance is delightfully achieved. In another of Hornby's plates, "La Jardiniere, Matin," this effect is realized with even greater pictorial force. These plates, though still showing here and there the influence of Lepere, mark a distinct advance in the work of the etcher.

The local workers were not excluded from the committee's list. Bertha E.

"Toilers of the City," a group of street-workers silhouetted against a dusty vista; firm and adequate, technically, but not so interesting nor so secure in style as another proof, "Site of the New Field Museum," which was one of the best things shown. Earl H. Reed, for the past three years president of the Society, exhibited five characteristic sand dune landscapes, all poetic and abstract, from which the most frankly linear, "Derelicts," a study of wind-beaten dune shrubs and grasses, was chosen.

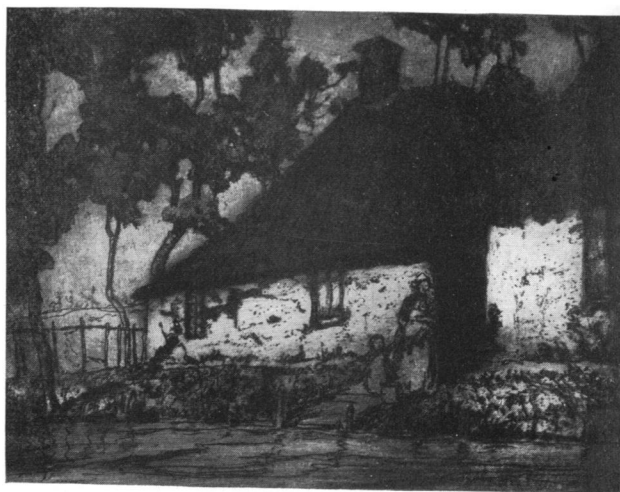
From G. Roy Partridge, whose highly fantastic decorative compositions strike an unusual, personal note, the powerful

COAL CRUSHER
By Bror J. Olsson-Nordfeldt



ST. JAMES
By Charles Henry White

DUTCH COTTAGE
By Robert B. Harshe



study, "The Bridge," was taken. Ernest Roth, who contributed several new architectural plates, all delicately and incisively drawn, furnished a vigorous bit of perspective, "The Buttress," and Franklin T. Wood, of Boston, an intimately rendered "Old Man with Hand to His Head."

The work of the committee of selection must have been uncommonly difficult in this case, since the limit to the fund did not allow them to consider a number of other plates equally attractive, such as Henry Winslow's magnificent gnarled "Wood Monsters," Dorothy Stevens's very personal Flemish architectural plates, figures by William A. Levy and Ernest Haskell, delicate proofs by Gustav Goetsch, intimately decorative tree compositions by Elizabeth Colwell, and many others, not to mention the temptations of the color and tonal work.

In the field of color etching, George Senseney showed little new work as important as that in the last exhibition; but Charles B. King was well represented, and Maud Hunt Squire continued her amusing experiments in flat tint plates. John Cotton and Philip Ayer Sawyer showed color plates for the first time, Sawyer bringing in two rare aquatints of dogs, or rather puppies—clever and impudent. Among the works expressed chiefly in tone were large, virile plates by Arthur S. Covey and David Tice Workman.

The plan of Associate Memberships makes it possible for the Chicago Society of Etchers to carry on, not only its regular annual exhibition, which is always open to any American etcher whose work is acceptable to the jury, and which is

installed at the Art Institute in some state, with white walls, white frames, azaleas and the like, but to arrange for several traveling exhibitions as well. During the past year two of these smaller exhibitions, mounted uniformly but not framed, have been in continual use, visiting the galleries of the Carnegie Institute at Pittsburgh, the Worcester Art Museum, Toledo, Milwaukee, and many other cities. Everywhere these collections have been well received. A system of labeling the mats makes it possible to dispense with printed catalogues, and the mats are equipped to make hanging as expeditious as possible. Thus the work is shown more widely than is possible with paintings. In this respect the etcher has a great advantage, since he can readily furnish proofs for several shows at the same time.

In a society where the scattered membership is not available for frequent meetings, work of a general nature must be substituted for the give-and-take of common association. This has led to the campaign for the understanding of the art, in which the publication by the Society of prints, bulletins and books is systematically undertaken. During the recent exhibition, a press has been installed in the gallery, with the intention (following the example of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers) of giving a few demonstrations of printing. This proved of so great general interest that the demonstrations, after the first week, were given daily—an experiment requiring some industry and hardihood, but admirably adapted to show to visitors the difference between a proof and a pen-and-ink.

MODERN PICTURES IN VENICE

BY DUNCAN C. PHILLIPS, JR.

IT is not generally known that there is in Venice, on the Grand Canal, a gallery devoted to modern paintings better worth seeing than many of the

damaged "old masters" which tourists so assiduously pursue and "discover" in old churches. That there is a potent charm about old Venetian pictures for the ap-